Developmental Disabilities Sub-Committee
April 21, 2021

Present: Brian Hart, Leisa Alger, Rebecca Robertshaw, AJ Kircher, Sean Eagen, Danielle Adriance-Wensel

Excused: Pam Overdurf, David Andreine

Minutes:

Approved without changes.

Director of Community Services Report – Brian Hart

➢ **State Updates:** The budget highlights are that they are going to do a 1% increase for Medicaid, the legislature rejected the 5% cut and agencies will be getting that money back, and there will be a 1% COLA increase. The legislature also rejected the idea of combining offices of OASAS and MH. This is most likely going to be done as a stand-alone bill in the future. Brian stated that is nice to be able to share some good news.

➢ **Local Plan:** Local needs are housing, transportation, workforce recruitment and retention, Employment/Job Opportunities, and inpatient treatment services. We also have two other issues that are identified on the chart as other need 1 and other need 2. A committee member asked if something could be put in the plan to create educational opportunities in all three disability areas to come together and learn about each other’s resources and what they do for their clients. We have some clients who have dual diagnoses and it would be beneficial for staff to learn about each disability area is doing to serve these clients. This will create relationships between agencies and well as build better relationships with their clients. This should be an annual event so that it is a refresher for old staff and an educational opportunity for new staff. We also should include law enforcement and the ER so they know who to serve the population that we work with on a daily basis. Brian stated that the law enforcement piece is being worked on with Police Reform. He also stated that he has been working with ER physicians with a brief Power Point hitting the main areas of concern. Another committee member stated with more individuals with disabilities being placed in the community and need additional supports this would help educate professionals and would be beneficial to individuals and families we work with on a daily basis. Brian stated that he would fit this in the Local Plan.

Housing – Background Information – Supply vs. demand continues to be a huge barrier to structured housing option when considering licensed housing across all three disability populations. These needs have been further exacerbated by the eviction moratorium in that individuals are able to stay endlessly in rentals, and therefore, turnover is limited, leaving a gap for those in need. In addition, the chronicity of the individuals in need of emergency housing has dramatically increased with bail reform, closure of the Developmental Centers and fall out from the pandemic.

- The Goal Statement is to continue to explore options for new housing development that either are licensed by one of the three state agencies, or utilize an unlicensed approach for individuals with mental health, substance...
abuse and/or developmental disability diagnosis including but not limited to mixed-use options.

- **Objective Statement** - Brian stated that there could only be five objectives, he asked if anyone had any questions or if anyone needed an objective to be changed. They all agreed with what was written in each of the objectives.

- In the next section, they want to know what kind of progress has been made over the past 12 months on each of the objectives. Brian stated that the fifth objective is new (CRISIS Housing) so there is no information on any progress. He went over the progress of the other four objectives. Brian asked everyone if any changes needed to be made to the progress he put for the objectives and everyone agreed with what was written.

**Transportation – Background Information** - As a result of COVID-19, St. Joe's ER closed earlier than anticipated, and all 9.39 evaluations are now being directed to Arnot Hospital across town while the psychiatric unit remains at St. Joe's. The agreed upon transportation methods was to be an internal hospital transport, but instead, the Arnot Healthcare System has been utilizing a local ambulance service and it has been billing for the service to third party payers if not to the individual as well. Brian stated that he is keeping this on the Local Plan, because the agreement that was made was for Arnot to transport internally (per the PAR Application), and not use the ambulance service and charge the individuals. Brian stated that he has learned that OMH has signed off and agrees with the way Arnot is currently handling transports using the Ambulance Service. Brian stated that he does not agree with what they have decided and will keep this in the Local Plan. Transportation to medical appointments require additional time in between the call and the appointment to make arrangements, and there is no viable option for arranging transportation to an urgent appointment. There are also issues with lack of adequate transportation on an as needed basis for individuals with disabilities to go to work.

- The Goal Statement is that NYS OMH has been consulted and awaiting guidance to assure that more compliant method is put in place for these psychiatric transports. Assess barriers to adequate and affordable transportation to work.

- **Objective Statement** – Brian asked if anyone had any questions or if anyone needed an objective to be changed. They all agreed with what was written in each of the objectives.

- In the next section, they want to know what kind of progress has been made over the past 12 months on each of the objectives. Brian stated that the fourth objective is new (Explore transportation options for hours and locations that are not easily accommodated by the public transit system) so there is no information on any progress. Brian went over the progress of the other three objectives and stated that two of the objectives had no progress. Objective number three’s progress is that Communication continues between the LGU and Arnot as well as the IGU and OMH Field Office. Brian asked everyone if any changes needed to be made to the progress he put for the objectives and everyone agreed with what was written.

**Workforce Recruitment and Retention – Background Information** – Workforce continues to be a significant issue in all three disability areas for virtually all agencies. The Finger Lakes PPS has made this a priority in their out year, but it will take some effort to coordinate with them as they were focused on the Monroe County region. It has become virtually impossible to find and maintain licensed staff as they either do
not exist in the region and/or we are all competing for the same limited staff resources. To that end, some disciplines like nurses, cannot be hired if competing with hospitals and/or the state system. In response to COVID-19, we are receiving more request for staff to remain working from home for both safety as well as assuring that they can meet the needs of their family when needed.

- The Goal Statement is to pursue options for proactively linking to high schools and colleges to promote the field of healthcare. Develop approaches for enticing new staff and sustaining existing employees. Pursue technological approaches to a more viable remote access workforce.
- Objective Statement - Brian asked if anyone had any questions or if anyone needed an objective to be changed. They all agreed with what was written in each of the objectives.
- In the next section, they want to know what kind of progress has been made over the past 12 months on each of the objectives. Brian stated that No Progress has been made in any of the five objectives due to the pandemic. Brian asked everyone if any changes needed to be made to the progress he put for the objectives and everyone agreed with what was written.

Employment/Job Opportunities – Background Information – With the closure of sheltered workshops in the community, individuals with developmental disabilities are left with either competitive employment if available or volunteer opportunities as options. However, not every individual’s skill set meets the need for competitive employment, and yet they would like to be paid for their time.

- The Goal Statement is to explore options for better meeting the needs associate with these employment gaps.
- Objective Statement - Brian asked if anyone had any questions or if anyone needed an objective to be changed. They all agreed with what was written in each of the objectives.
- In the next section, they want to know what kind of progress has been made over the past 12 months on each of the objectives. Brian stated that these are new objectives and there is no progress to report.

Developmental Disability Children Services – Background Information – Far too often children find themselves in need of services, but they don’t meet OPWDD criteria, and/or aren’t eligible for special education services as determined by either the Committee on Pre-School Special Education (CPSE) or the Committee on Special Education (CSE). As a result, families are left with trying to pay for clinical services out-of-pocket or opting to have their child not receive services entirely.

- The Goal Statement is to identify the scope of the problem, and determine barriers that need to be addressed including but not limited to, accuracy of information being provided to decision making bodies, addressing workforce issues, and identifying alternative funding.
- Objective Statement - Brian asked if anyone had any questions or if anyone needed an objective to be changed. They all agreed with what was written in each of the objectives.
- In the next section, they want to know what kind of progress has been made over the past 12 months on each of the objectives. There have been no progress in any of the objectives due to the pandemic. This has been put on the back burner and we now need to start putting some effort in this area in a proactive way.
Other Need (1) – Brian went over the assessment and services issue and asked if anything needed to be changed. All agreed to keep it as written. Brian stated going into the new school year of 2021-2022, they are hoping to have a new preschool program for children with developmental disabilities in place as the Pathways program will end in June.

Other Need (2) – Brian went over the tele-med/teleconferencing technology issue and asked if anything needed to be changed. All agreed to keep it as written. Brian stated that infrastructure costs are huge, as people need the broadband internet services in place in order to connect their computer/smart phone.

Brian stated he had great feedback in emails on the local plan.

Motion to approve the Proposed Local Plan and have it presented to the Community Services Board was made and seconded. All in Favor – Everyone in Attendance, Motion passed.

Sharing by Community Members

- **ARC** – They just received a grant to assist with hardware for tele-health for seniors and the developmentally disabled population. Training the individuals on the hardware will also be included. Hopefully this grant will help those in need. They just hired someone for the program and will get information out to everyone on the referral process.

- **Capabilities** – They are offering transportation to individuals for employment. You need to contact Katrina Stanton at Capabilities, in order to make sure we have enough drivers to take care of the need. This will be available through the fall of this year.

The next meeting is scheduled for June 16, 2021.